

What is claimed is:

1. A toy, comprising:

a structural configuration including a portion thereof defining an animal restricted region; and

5 said structural configuration including an other portion defining an animal access region.

2. A toy according to claim 1, wherein said animal restricted region is created by provision of structure at least partially physically shielding said animal restricted region from access by a mouth of the animal.

10 3. A toy according to claim 2, wherein said animal restricted region includes a handle graspable by a hand of a human user.

4. A toy which inhibits user hand contact with animal saliva deposited on a play toy during interactive play by the animal and the user, comprising:

15 at least one structural portion being disposed in a position readily accessible by a mouth of the animal and by which the animal can hold the toy by retaining the at least one structural portion in the mouth;

at least one hand-holdable portion grippable by the user; and

20 a shielding portion arranged to at least partially discourage animal access to said at least one hand-holdable portion

5. A toy according to claim 4, wherein:

said at least one structural portion includes an elongated member extending along a toy axis;

5 said at least one hand-holdable portion includes at least one handle disposed at at least one of opposed ends of said elongated member; and

said shielding portion includes shielding structure extending at least partially about said at least one handle.

10 6. A toy according to claim 5, wherein said shielding structure includes a generally cup-shaped shield having open ends arranged to point outward of a central region of the toy in a direction of said toy axis.

7. A toy according to claim 6, wherein the shield includes cutouts therein.

15 8. A toy according to claim 5, wherein said at least one handle includes two handles disposed respectively at the opposed ends of said elongated member.

9. A toy according to claim 4, wherein:

said at least one structural portion includes members disposed in circumferentially spaced apart positions about a toy axis and radially spaced apart therefrom;

said at least one hand-holdable portion is positioned radially inward of a outermost radial extent of said members.

5 10. A toy according to claim 9, wherein said members include at least three members at least a portion of each of the members extending longitudinally co-directional with said toy axis.

11. A toy according to claim 10, wherein said at least a portion of said three members which extend longitudinally are spaced apart circumferentially from one another by approximately equal angular intervals.

10 12. A toy according to claim 10, wherein:
said at least one hand-holdable portion includes at least one handle approximately aligned longitudinally with the toy axis; and
radially outward portions of the members are extended outward from a center of the toy in an axial direction such that said radially outward portions extend past an axial position of an inwardmost end of the handle, thereby at least
15 partially shielding the handle.

13. A toy according to claim 12, wherein outermost edges of the members are shaped to collectively describe a generally spherical envelope.

14. A toy according to claim 13, wherein the toy is self-righting, such that when tossed onto a relatively horizontal support surface, the toy will come

to rest with the at least one handle extending horizontally, and generally parallel with the support surface.

15. A toy according to claim 9, wherein the toy is formed integrally.

5 16. A toy according to claim 15, wherein the toy includes a resilient material.

17. A method of inhibiting user hand contact with animal saliva deposited on a play toy during interactive play by the animal and the user, comprising the steps of:

10 providing the toy with an animal access region readily available to gripping in a mouth of the animal; and

providing the toy with an animal restricted region which is less likely to be accessed by the mouth of the animal, said animal restricted region being hand-holdable by the user.

15 18. A method according to claim 17, further comprising:
grabbing the animal restricted region by the hand of the user; and
making the toy available to the animal so that at least a portion of the animal access region is grippable in the mouth of the animal.